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C. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A method of tracking surplus reduction actions, said method comprising:
receiving a surplus reduction action from a user, wherein the user is an employee and wherein the surplus reduction action includes a surplus acknowledgement;
identifying a user identifier corresponding to the user;
and
storing the user identifier and data corresponding to the surplus reduction action in a nonvolatile storage area; and
providing benefits data to the employee in response to receiving the employee's surplus acknowledgement.
2. (Original) The method as described in claim 1 further comprising:
receiving a digital signature from the user;
authenticating the digital signature; and
storing the digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Currently amended) The method as described in claim 3 1 further comprising:
sending the employee a non-compete agreement;
receiving a digital signature from the employee corresponding to the non-compete agreement; and
storing the employee's digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.

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5. (Original) The method as described in claim 4 further comprising:
identifying one or more surplus employees that have confidential knowledge of an organization; and writing a non-compete indicator to a non-compete data storage area corresponding to the identified surplus employees, wherein the non-compete agreement is sent to surplus employees in response to the identification.
6. (Original) The method as described in claim 5 further comprising:
selecting the group of identified surplus employees; analyzing digital signatures received from one or more of the identified surplus employees; determining based on the analysis which of the identified surplus employees have not provided digital signatures in response to non-compete agreements; and sending a reminder notification to the determined group of surplus employees.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Currently amended) An information handling system comprising:
one or more processors;
a memory accessible by the processors;
a nonvolatile storage area accessible by the processors;
~~an~~ a tracking tool for tracking surplus reduction actions, the tracking tool including:
means for receiving a surplus reduction action from a user, wherein the user is an employee and wherein

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the surplus reduction action includes a surplus acknowledgment;
means for identifying a user identifier corresponding to the user; and
means for storing the user identifier and data corresponding to the surplus reduction action in the nonvolatile storage area; and
means for providing benefits data to the employee in response to receiving the employee's surplus acknowledgement.

9. (Original) The information handling system as described in claim 8 further comprising:
means for receiving a digital signature from the user;
means for authenticating the digital signature; and
means for storing the digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Currently amended) The information handling system as described in claim 4~~9~~ further comprising:
means for sending the employee a non-compete agreement;
means for receiving a digital signature from the employee corresponding to the non-compete agreement; and
means for storing the employee's digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
12. (Original) The information handling system as described in claim 11 further comprising:
means for identifying one or more surplus employees that have confidential knowledge of an organization; and

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means for writing a non-compete indicator to a non-compete data storage area corresponding to the identified surplus employees, wherein the non-compete agreement is sent to surplus employees in response to the identification.

13. (Original) The information handling system as described in claim 12 further comprising:

means for selecting the group of identified surplus employees;

means for analyzing digital signatures received from one or more of the identified surplus employees;

means for determining based on the analysis which of the identified surplus employees have not provided digital signatures in response to non-compete agreements; and

means for sending a reminder notification to the determined group of surplus employees.

14. (Currently amended) A computer program product stored in a computer operable media for tracking surplus reduction actions, said computer program product comprising:

means for receiving a surplus reduction action from a user, wherein the user is an employee and wherein the surplus reduction action includes a surplus acknowledgment;

means for identifying a user identifier corresponding to the user; and

means for storing the user identifier and data corresponding to the surplus reduction action in the nonvolatile storage area; and

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means for providing benefits data to the employee in response to receiving the employee's surplus acknowledgement.

15. (Original) The computer program product as described in claim 14 further comprising:
means for receiving a digital signature from the user;
means for authenticating the digital signature; and
means for storing the digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
16. (Cancelled)
17. (Currently amended) The computer program product as described in claim ~~16~~ 14 further comprising:
means for sending the employee a non-compete agreement;
means for receiving a digital signature from the employee corresponding to the non-compete agreement; and
means for storing the employee's digital signature in the nonvolatile storage area.
18. (Original) The computer program product as described in claim 17 further comprising:
means for identifying one or more surplus employees that have confidential knowledge of an organization; and
means for writing a non-compete indicator to a non-compete data storage area corresponding to the identified surplus employees, wherein the non-compete agreement is sent to surplus employees in response to the identification.
19. (Original) The computer program product as described in claim 18 further comprising:

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means for selecting the group of identified surplus employees;
means for analyzing digital signatures received from one or more of the identified surplus employees;
means for determining based on the analysis which of the identified surplus employees have not provided digital signatures in response to non-compete agreements; and
means for sending a reminder notification to the determined group of surplus employees.

20. (Cancelled)